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INSIDE



Fundraiser

The 2004 Little Miss CNMI contestants will be having a luncheon on March 20, 2004 at the 13 Fishermen Pavilion. The menu will be red rice, coco salad, chicken, spare ribs, and a soda.

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Ousted Leader

Rebels occupied the national police headquarters but kept away from the U.S.-guarded presidential palace after their convoy entered the capital Monday to the cheers of thousands celebrating the ouster of President Jean-Bertrand Aristide.

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News Source

Tom Brokaw, Peter Jennings, Dan Rather ... and Jon Stewart? Readers over 30 might scoff at Stewart's inclusion—assuming they know who he is. For many under 30, the host of Comedy Central's "The Daily Show" is, improbably, an important news source.

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READING MANIA

Garapan Elementary School students gather at the school grounds early Tuesday morning to read together as part of their 7th annual Reading Craze, a month-long activity that attempts to set an island-wide record for the most number of people reading at the same time. Yesterday's kick-off, led by GES principal Yvonne Reyes-Gomez, was participated in by parents, teachers, and visitors, including former GES teacher and now congressman Ray Tebuteb.

LIBERTY DONES

Inter-island land exchange ban revived

By MARIAN A. MARAYA
REPORTER

Members of the House of Representatives voted in favor of a proposed legislation seeking to reinstate the ban on CNMI inter-island land exchanges.

House Bill 14-68, offered by Rep. Jesus T. Attao, was passed by a vote of 17 to nothing during a session yesterday. Only Federal and Foreign Relations Committee Chairman Clyde K. Norita, who is on an off-island medical emergency, was not present to cast a vote.

The bill essentially seeks to reenact Public Law 5-33, which restricts the "public land exchange program to ex-

changes for lands physically located within the same senatorial district.

This provision ceased to have effect on June 1, 1997.

"There was a 10-year sunset clause and the 10th year was on June 1, 1997. The restriction is to restrict land exchanges from occurring between the islands. So by emplacing this law, it will continue the restriction to limit the land

exchange within a senatorial district, not inter-island exchange," explained Minority Leader Heinz S. Hofschneider.

HB 14-68 seeks to amend 2 CMC §4145 (d) to reflect that "land exchange shall be made only for land physically located within the same senatorial district...as the land for which an exchange is to be made."

See INTER-ISLAND on Page 8

Conservation group supports Pangelinan

By LIBERTY DONES
REPORTER

Former Department of Lands and Natural Resources Tomas Pangelinan has found an ally in a local conservation group in his unilateral decision to terminate certain farm leases in Kagman.

Ignacio V. Cabrera, chairman of the Saipan and Northern Islands Soil and



Pangelinan

Water Conservation District said that Pangelinan was within his authoritative and legal rights to evict the farmers from their farm plots.

He said Pangelinan, who also

maintains a farm in Kagman, had consulted his group on the issue.

"His actions were conducted in consultation with S&NI SWCD, with our full knowledge and support. His actions were not based on intimidation or political motivation, but on specific, verifiable facts and violations," said Cabrera in a Feb. 25 letter to Gov. Juan N. Babauta.

See CONSERVATION on Page 8

'Legislature didn't shoulder Maratita's trips'

By MARIAN A. MARAYA
REPORTER

House leadership spokesperson Charles Reyes sought to set the record straight yesterday on Rep. Janet Maratita's two recent off-island trips, saying both were at no cost to the Legislature.

"The point here is that Janet didn't spend a single cent using legislative

funds," Reyes told reporters in a briefing yesterday.

The public information officer was referring to when Maratita joined a CNMI delegation in the inaugural Saipan-Shanghai



Maratita

flight by China Eastern Airlines last January and her Washington D.C. trip for the congressional hearing on the CNMI's push for a nonvoting delegate held last week.

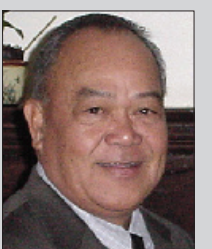
"I understand that the [D.C.] trip was financed by the governor. She did argue that she has a legitimate purpose. Most of the people here on Saipan are support-

See LEGISLATURE on Page 8

Pete A: Delegate status vital to NMI growth

By EDITH G. ALEJANDRO
REPORTER

The CNMI's potential economic development and growth are critically dependent upon a secure and sound relationship with the U.S. government; thus a CNMI nonvoting delegate status in the U.S. House of Representative is very important to the Northern Marianas.



Tenorio

See PETE A on Page 8

Local

CRM cites CUC for sewage overflow

By JOHN RAVELO
REPORTER

The Coastal Resources Management Office yesterday issued the Commonwealth Utilities Corp. a citation over the recurring sewage overflows in Tanapag, saying the situation poses a serious threat to public health and has degraded the nearby coastal waters.

CRMO director Joaquin D. Salas threatened the CUC with monetary fine if the latter fails to comply with mandated cor-

rective measures. The citation indicated that it was the “final warning notice.”

Salas said the CUC also failed to post advisories to warn beach goers about the impact of the sewage overflows on marine water quality. He declared the overflows as threats to the health of those using the nearby Tanapag Social Hall and the Children’s Park.

Recent inspections conducted by the CRMO disclosed that CUC failed to post the adviso-

ries that it earlier said it would install during instances of sewage overflows, Salas said.

The CRMO’s chief enforcement officer, Martin Cabrera, also discovered that the holding basin adjacent to the CUC’s T1 Lift Station has not been maintained properly.

“The basin is overgrown with vegetation and has accumulation of sediment and other deposits that inhibit its intended goal of retaining overflowed sewage,” Salas said. “The cur-

rent condition of the basin limits its ability to retain any considerable volume of wastewater.”

The CRMO sent a copy of the warning notice yesterday to CUC executive director Lorraine Babauta, following the sewage overflows Wednesday and Sunday last week.

Salas said the recent incidents prompted the CRMO to issue the final warning notice, although the agency earlier vacated a Jan. 31 citation against the CUC after the utility firm reported on upgrade

‘Urgent action needed on sewer overflows’

By LIBERTY DONES
REPORTER

Commonwealth Utilities Corp. board member Joseph Torres said the agency needs to address the root cause of recurring sewage overflows in various areas on island, citing its urgency due to its effects on public health.

“I’m one with the board...that this must be addressed immediately. It disappoints me being on the board because this problem keeps on occurring. But one thing is sure, if there’s health hazard, it has to be taken care of immediately. This is urgent,” he said.

“This is what I would call an emergency. Forget about other things that we can do without,” he added.

Torres said that based on reports, sewage overflow affects several families in different places on the island.

“We often hear about Tanapag overflow but it also happens in other places like Koblerville, San Antonio, [and] Middle Road,” he said.

He said that as far as the board is concerned, it is not short in reminding the management on the need to address the problem. “We’ve been talking about it but I’ve not seen any concrete progress.”

He said that, based on reports and citations from regulatory agencies such as the Division of Environmental Quality and the Coastal Resources Management, the recurring sewer problems are caused by poor system maintenance, possibly a design problem, and lack of facilities.

Early last year, the CUC management said the problem would persist until all major sewer projects on the island are completed.

For instance, it cited that an overflow in As Terlaje occurred because “flows to the pump station have exceeded the capacity of the collection system.”

It said that the capacity problem would be addressed by two projects: redirecting of wastewater flow and upgrading of pump stations.

These solutions, however, are tied up with the existing Airport sewerline project and the Beach Road sewer upgrade project.

The airport sewer project was expected to be operational by June 2003, while part C of the Beach Road sewer project remains in the design evaluation stage.

The CUC said overflow may also be caused by “illegal connection” to the system, particularly in Tanapag. CUC said illegal connections could have aggravated the equipment failure in CUC’s T1 pump station in the village.

CUC had admitted that overflows of wastewater from the sewer system hooked to the Agingan treatment plant do occur. The facility’s needed upgrade to meet federal standards has been delayed due to lack of funding.

The CUC reportedly needs at least \$2 million for the project.

Meantime, the CUC is forced to provide temporary housing to affected families who demand compensation.

CUC said it usually spends thousands of dollars in hotel accommodation for some families.

work at the T1 station. Perennial overflows from the sewage facility have been happening for several years now.

The CRMO required the CUC to install overflow catchment that could hold more than 25 percent the volume of sewage that normally passes through the T1 station for a period of one

hour. Salas said the installation of the catchment would allow CUC’s personnel to respond timely should an overflow happen again.

The CRMO gave the CUC 30 days to complete the installation of the catchment facility or the utility firm would be fined up to \$10,000 per day of violation.

CUC



House reprograms funds for Saipan projects

By **MARIAN A. MARAYA**
REPORTER

The House of Representatives agreed yesterday to take away money originally meant for the Precinct 2 water reservoir project to finance road improvements in Precinct 4, as proposed under House Bill 14-51.

The bill stirred debate among minority and majority members, although it eventually gained unanimous support from all 17 lawmakers present during a session yesterday.

Minority leader Heinz S. Hofschneider was particularly curious as to why Floor Leader Oscar Babauta was willing to part with the \$400,000 that he and former Precinct 2 Rep. An-

drew S. Salas fought to secure during the 13th Legislature, during which Hofschneider was speaker.

Babauta explained that the decision was based on discussions among Precinct 2 and 4 lawmakers and the Commonwealth Utilities Corp., which reportedly determined that \$400,000 is not enough to build a water reservoir.

“In the first place, the \$400,000 that was supposed to have built a water reservoir and a distribution system wasn’t enough. Secondly, CUC cannot locate a suitable land to construct the water reservoir in that particular site since most of the land area there belongs to private landowners and farmers,” Babauta told

reporters yesterday.

Quitugua, author of HB 14-51, echoed the same arguments, citing CUC’s assessment of the water reservoir project.

“CUC indicated that they cannot perform or drill the reservoir. One is that there’s no public land to put it on. The other one is that with the new installation of the water lines and some wells, the water has improved, so at this time, the need to construct a small reservoir is not good at this time,” the Precinct 4 congressman explained.

HB 14-51 essentially reappropriates \$400,000 from Public Law 13-13 to fund road improvements in Precinct 4 and the renovation of the Susupe Beach Park,

which is part of Precinct 2.

“[Former Rep] Andrew Salas and Rep. Babauta supported the water reservoir in the last Legislature because they had a serious water problem in their precinct. And they asked the leadership then to look for money. We were able to give them \$400,000. If their defense is that \$400,000 is \$100,000 short for the construction of a half-million gallon reservoir, if you take it away completely, we’re half-a-million short. Logic,” Hofschneider pointed out in an interview with reporters yesterday.

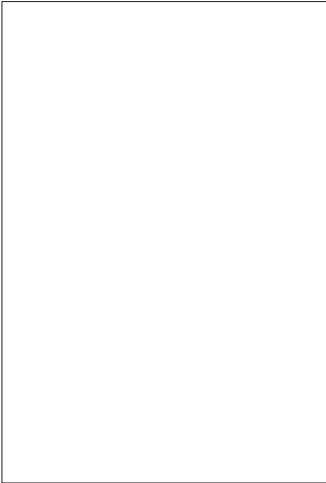
The Precinct 3 congressman, however, conceded that Precinct 2 and 4 representatives have the prerogative to reprioritize projects within their precinct.

“As the two representatives stated, they were willing to forgo the \$400,000 given to them and give it up for some other purpose. The \$100,000 remains within their precinct because Susupe park is within their precinct. That’s reprioritization from water to the park. And \$300,000 goes to precinct 4 for road paving,” said Hofschneider.

Babauta maintained that CUC’s recommendation was to use the \$400,000 for some other project, especially as several wells and a main water supply line has recently been installed to address the poor water services in the Chalan Kanoa area.

“The newly constructed well and distribution system is finished. And I believe it’s going

now through its test procedures to see how the pressure works. And of course, monitoring contaminants,” said Babauta.



Two Korean execs sue their employer

By **JOHN RAVELO**
REPORTER

Two Korean executives of a garment firm sued the company in federal court for alleged labor violations that included nonpayment of wages and overtime.

Production manager Kim Chang Joon and maintenance supervisor Kim Dae-Hwan filed separate civil actions against Michigan Inc. They want to collect alleged unpaid wages and overtime, besides monetary award that the court may grant.

The production manager began working for Michigan upon arriving on Saipan in March 2003, according to his lawyer, Joseph Aldan Arriola.

Arriola said the manager’s special entry permit was only issued on May 9, 2003, effective for one year.

The supervisor, meanwhile, arrived on Saipan in 1996 and began working for Michigan since then, according to Arriola.

The company, however,

asked the executives to resign without just cause and hired their respective replacements, he added.

Arriola accused Michigan of failing to keep records of his clients’ work hours.

“At most, if not all times from March 2003 through Dec. 2003, [the production manager] was required to work more than 40 hours in a workweek. On average, [he] was required to work in excess of 16 hours per day,” the lawyer said.

Michigan also required the supervisor to work for an average of more than 16 hours per day since his employment in 1996, Arriola said.

Both executives claimed that they were not paid overtime compensation. They also claimed having unpaid wages.

The company advised the executives to resign from their jobs this January. Arriola said the company breached the executives’ employment contracts and effectively terminated his clients’ employment.

Workshop focuses on roadside safety

By **JOHN RAVELO**
REPORTER

Architectural and engineering design consultants and contractors yesterday attended a workshop on roadside safety design facilitated by the Federal Highway Administration.

Public Works Secretary Juan S. Reyes said his department requested the FHA to conduct the workshop without cost to participants.

Greg Schertz, safety engineer at the FHA’s Central Federal Lands Highway Division in Colorado, conducted the roadside design and maintenance training to enhance safety of vehicles that run off the road.

As part of his presentation,

Schertz used videos depicting crash tests to explain roadside device characteristics.

Some 44 participants, including those from the DPW and the Commonwealth Utilities Corp., attended the workshop, which began Monday at the Pedro P. Tenorio Multi-Purpose Center.

Yesterday afternoon, the workshop focused on the importance of road sign visibility at night and the national standards for retroreflectivity, among other matters.

Schertz and the federal agency’s Johan Bemelen would provide contractors and government representatives training about safe work zone traffic control techniques beginning today until Friday.

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Manhunt on for stabbing suspect

By EDITH G. ALEJANDRO
REPORTER

The Department of Public Safety has ordered a manhunt against a 20-year-old suspect who allegedly abetted a minor during a scuffle in Garapan by stabbing the victim, police said yesterday.

An arrest warrant was issued against Oncho A. Alafonso, 20, after his cohort, a 16-year-old minor, was arrested and charged with various offenses.

The minor was charged with aggravated assault and battery, multiple counts of assault with a dangerous weapon, and assault and battery. The minor is being held on a \$50,000 cash

bail.

Police department spokesperson Sgt. Tom Blas Jr. said the incident happened on Feb. 22 when the two suspects ganged up on a 28-year-old male victim, Jasen Ada in Central Garapan. The victim was wounded during the fight.

Blas said that after a thorough investigation, detectives have identified the suspects in the case. On Monday night, the minor was arrested pursuant to an arrest warrant issued against the suspect.

The minor was found in Sadog Tasi where he was served with the warrant and was taken into police custody.

After the arrest of the minor, police tried to locate the other suspect,

Alafonso. As of press time, the suspect remains at large.

“We are looking for Mr. Alafonso and we are asking for the help of the community in locating him. Anyone who may have information as to the whereabouts of the suspect, please call the Criminal Investigation Bureau at 664-9045,” said Blas.

Also, the NMI Crime Stoppers is seeking the assistance of the community in bringing Alafonso to justice. Individuals who may have information of Alafonso may call the NMI Crime Stoppers tips line at 234-7272. The Crime Stoppers pays up to \$1,000 in reward for information leading to an arrest.

MVA: Marianas promotion a success

The Marianas Visitors Authority, together with the Guam Visitors Bureau, recently returned from a successful exhibition at the 11th Travel Tour Expo in Mandaluyong City, Philippines.

The event, held Feb. 6-8, was organized by the Philippine Travel Agencies Association, the largest travel association in the country. This year’s expo welcomed more than 50,000 travel agents and consumers alike.

The MVA and GVB shared booth space at the expo, where they showcased the attractiveness of the Marianas to business and leisure travelers. The MVA delegation included directors JM Guerrero and Edward



Ogren

Maratita, Public Relations and Community Programs manager Martin Duenas, and marketing

assistant Brenda Repeki.

According to MVA statistics to date, the CNMI has received more than 1,500 visitors since the beginning of this fiscal year—October thru the end of January 2004—exhibiting a 61.2-percent growth compared to the same period last year.

“We are confident that this market has the potential to grow because of direct Continental flights from Manila and the U.S. accredited NCLEX program offered at the Northern Marianas College,” said MVA managing director Jonas Ogren.

Several tourism organizations that participated in the expo included China, Hong Kong, Macau, Malaysia, Spain, and Thailand, to name a few.

Five arrested during street sweep operation

By EDITH G. ALEJANDRO
REPORTER

Authorities have caught five suspects with separate criminal offenses during the fourth street-sweep operation conducted by the joint forces of the Thief Apprehension Select Coalition and COPPS team in Garapan.

The operation merged, investigated, identified, and apprehended suspects in connection with a string of burglaries, felony thefts, theft of vehicle, criminal mischief cases, and assault with a dangerous weapon. The five arrested included one minor.

According to police department spokesperson Sgt. Tom Blas Jr., the first two arrested were David Clyde Diaz, 20, and a 15-year-old minor in connection with burglary and theft and criminal mischief cases. Police said the two were allegedly involved in the burglary incident at the Mike and Del store in San Antonio.

The minor was arrested on Tinian by the Tinian police department and was transported back to Saipan, while Diaz was apprehended in San Antonio. The two suspects were booked and detained.

Authorities also arrested Charles Lynn Rupurei, 21, in connection with theft of vehicle charges lodged against him. The suspect was identified after an investigation by the TASC team. According to reports, Rupurei was allegedly involved in stealing a red Hyundai coupe, which he later crashed on As Perdido Road.

Blas said the suspect was apprehended in Garapan at the Mobil Gas Station and was taken to the Adult Correctional Facility where he was booked and detained.

Police also arrested Dawan Zhao, 55, for his alleged involvement in an assault with a dangerous weapon incident. He was apprehended in Afefnas village. The suspect was booked and detained.

According to reports, Zhao allegedly assaulted another male and used a bottle as weapon against the victim.

Blas also reported that joint forces arrested Antolin Luck, 55, in connection with a burglary incident in Garapan. The suspect was apprehended in Central Garapan where he was served with the arrest warrant and taken to the Adult Correctional Facility where he was booked and detained.

OVR to hold Tinian outreach

A representative from the CNMI Office of Vocational Rehabilitation will visit the Tinian community today and will be staying on the island until tomorrow.

Individuals with disabilities interested in applying for vocational rehabilitation or independent living services are encouraged to meet with VR Counselor II Bernice Ravell at the Tinian Health Center from 8am to 4pm for an overview of OVR’s programs and services.

Ravell will also conduct follow-up with current OVR consumers on their rehabilitation plan.

Anyone who has a disability, wants to work, and is interested in receiving VR services, or an individual with a disability who is interested in receiving IL services to improve functional independence in the home or community can call Laurinda C. Santos at 433-9233. You can also contact OVR directly from Tinian by calling the toll-free number 433-2010.

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Opinion

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EDITORIAL

Haiti's 'new chapter'

Though he bitterly disappointed Haitians who hoped he would bring democracy and development to the hemisphere's poorest country, Jean-Bertrand Aristide in the end made the right decision. Rather than make a last stand in his capital, he accepted the offer of an American plane trip to exile and opened the way for a U.S.-led international force to end the anarchy overtaking the country. History will likely judge that Mr. Aristide was mostly responsible for his own downfall: He presided over a corrupt government that regularly used violence against its opponents and eventually provoked a violent uprising. But his flight to exile Sunday was forced by the Bush administration, which refused to support international intervention or commit U.S. forces until after Mr. Aristide capitulated. President Bush's declaration Sunday that "the Haitian constitution is working" offered scant cover for the reality that his decisions over the past two weeks had led to the departure of an elected president.

Whether the downfall of Mr. Aristide leads to "a new chapter" and "a hopeful future" for Haiti, as Mr. Bush suggested Sunday, will depend in large measure on how the United States conducts its latest intervention in the country. As a first step, U.S. forces, which were to begin arriving Sunday night, must stop the looting and lawlessness in Port-au-Prince and other cities, and they must ensure that the violent gangs roaming the country—both pro and anti-Aristide—are disarmed and disbanded. Leaders of the armed rebel groups include criminals and former paramilitary operatives from the military dictatorship that preceded Mr. Aristide; they must not be allowed to seize a share of power. Instead, the United States and allies in the Organization of American States and in the Caribbean Community should help to establish a transitional government and organize new democratic elections as soon as possible.

There is much to be learned from the last U.S. effort at stabilizing Haiti a decade ago. U.S. forces left too quickly, and they provided too little training and aid to the police they left behind. Not enough was done to help Haitians build democratic institutions. When Mr. Aristide's party manipulated the results of a congressional election, the United States suspended all further aid to his government, blocked some other development assistance, and delegated the job of finding a political solution to OAS and Caribbean diplomats with little or no leverage.

Without a more concerted effort at nation-building—comparable to that which the United States has supported in the Balkans, or Iraq—the pattern of crisis and foreign intervention in Haiti will not be broken. So far, the administration's approach offers scant grounds for optimism. As the crisis mounted over the past several months, U.S. officials ignored it until violence had spread across the country. Even when it became clear that foreign intervention would be necessary, the administration tried to hand the problem off to France or Canada. Only over the weekend did Mr. Bush finally accept what should have been obvious from the beginning: that the United States must lead any rescue of Haiti.

Now that the Marines are once again to be in Port-au-Prince, we can only hope that Mr. Bush will make a large enough commitment of U.S. resources to ensure that Haiti's next president is democratically chosen—and that he has a fair chance at success.

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Job opening, some English required

Last week, California Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger said he supported a constitutional amendment to allow foreign-born Americans to run for president. At first I was puzzled by his interest in this issue, but then I discovered a little-known fact about the man: He was born in Austria. You'd never know it from hearing him talk, but then he is a highly skilled actor.

And he makes a good point: The U.S. Constitution is full of silly, outdated stuff about separating church and state and not putting you in jail without a trial. It's full of lots of 18th-century slang like "freedom" and "privacy."

And one of the silliest things of all is the part where it says foreigners can't be president. Arnold's right. The problem with presidents today is that they come off as a little too... American. We've got that whole cowboy "bring it on" thing goin'. What we need is a presidency injected with a little sensitivity and worldly sophistication. And who better to deliver that than the grab-and-grope action hero from "Jingle All the Way"? Schwarzenegger mentioned the German-born Henry Kissinger as someone who would have made a great president had the Constitution not been in the way—as if that ever stopped Kissinger.

Quite frankly, I think of foreigners as more educated and more socially progressive when it comes to issues such as abortion, euthanasia, birth control, the environment, religion, marriage, materialism, nuclear disarmament, poverty, human rights and life on Earth as we know it. They generally speak at least two languages and have, by definition, traveled outside the United States.

They're also less likely to wear spurs and a 4-foot-tall lime-green Styrofoam cowboy hat to an international conference and call everybody they meet there "Shooter!" Foreigners can't run for president? I believe only foreigners should run for president.

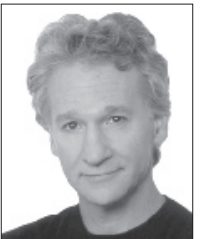
American presidents are like American beer—bland, watered down and advertised to us as if we're morons. They come from boring places like Hope, Ark., Yorba Linda, Calif., and that town in Texas where President Bush was born: New Haven, Conn.

Face it, the presidency is a lousy job. And who does lousy jobs we don't want anymore better than foreigners?

The guy we've got doing it now works only part time. He spends half the day raising money from mining companies and the other

By **BILL MAHER**
Los Angeles Times

Maher is host of HBO's "Real Time with Bill Maher."



half telling schoolchildren that al-Qaida wants them dead, and he's in bed by 7!

The average Frenchman knows more geography than we do. The average Japanese knows more math. And the average Guatemalan is already here, cleaning your house and taking care of your kids. If we can trust them with our children, why not the White House? They can run it and clean it.

As a history buff, I've noticed that of all the worst presidents in U.S. history, every single one of them was an American. Doesn't anyone see a pattern here? Nixon, Carter, Hoover—down the line—Thomas E. Dewey, all native-born Americans. Which only goes to show that sometimes ethnic profiling ... well, sometimes it's just a matter of common sense.

Just once I'd like my president, the nation's president, to be like one of those presidents Italy always has, with the expensive suits and the permanent tan and the Versace mistress, and there's photos of them canoodling on a boat but nobody cares because hey, that's "amore." Our guy gets impeached. In Italy, the stock market goes up.

It comes down to this: British people just sound better than we do. When they ask Tony Blair about weapons of mass destruction, the stuff he pulls out of his hat always sounds so much better than the stuff Bush pulls out of his hat. We're Americans, don't we deserve the best?

It's too late to undo the injustice that kept foreign-born presidential timber like Madeleine Albright and William Shatner out of the White House. But think of the future!

The job of president is just too important to be left to an American.

A prisoner in my own home

By **FRANCES ANN D. AMOG**

Do you know what it feels like to be a prisoner in your own home? Ironically, that which you call “home” does not recognize you as its own. You are not a citizen. You are not even considered a resident. You cannot leave for fear of not being allowed to enter upon your return. You have no right to vote in general elections. And, as a student, you are considered “ineligible” to apply for the different scholarships and grants needed for graduating seniors who wish to continue their studies in the U.S. And you cannot partake in all the privileges that are granted to those who hold what you do not—a U.S. passport. In the end, that is the only thing that separates you from everybody else. And that is what keeps you a “prisoner” in your own home.

My name is Frances Ann Donato Amog, born on October 31, 1982 on the beautiful island of Saipan, and one of many children recognized as “stateless.” I have lived my whole life on the island, embracing the culture and its people as my own. Saipan is home to me. It is all I have ever known. And it is where I one day hope to raise a family of my own. For so long, I was unaware that the island I call home does not recognize me as its own. During my senior year, the Board of Elections came to school to register all the seniors in the hopes of encouraging youths to exercise our right to vote in the upcoming general elections. Instead of filling out a form so that I could partake in the elections,

I sat back and watched my friends fill out theirs because I was deemed ineligible to vote. I could not participate in an event that would determine the direction the island was headed in the near future. I could not participate in voting for those who I know in my heart would do a great job. I knew those who ran for offices. I grew up watching them around the island. I went to school with their children. Yet I was still ineligible. It is a lonely feeling filled with despair when I finally realized how different I was.

In addition to that, I could not travel abroad. While my friends headed off to the states for family vacations, I spent every summer I knew on the island, enjoying all that the island offered. I attended the annual carnival and saw movies with friends. I watched the parade every Fourth of July with my family. I could not even travel to Guam for fear of not being allowed to enter because of my status, and the even bigger fear of not being able to return home. I felt as though I were being punished for something I had no control over, for something borne out of circumstance. I was not allowed to leave, or to ever step foot off the island, because there was always the risk of not being able to return home even though I was born there.

And lastly, as a “stateless” child, I lost any chance to further my studies in the U.S. despite having graduated at the top of my class. I worked so hard throughout high school, maintaining an A-average, hoping that I would have the chance to study in the states. During my senior year, I began looking at several colleges and universities in the States, namely Gonzaga University and Seattle University in

Washington. However, when attempting to apply for scholarships and grants, I noticed that every single one required U.S. citizenship, which I did not have. The only thing I was eligible for was a foreign student financial aid. I was heartbroken. I had such high hopes to attend college in the U.S. but I couldn’t. On graduation night, I walked away with several awards and no scholarship or grant. I should have been one of the first off to college, but instead, I watched my friends and classmates embark on their own journey, each filled with excitement. I was engulfed in a sea of loneliness because I noticed the uncertainty of my future due to the circumstances that surrounded my status.

I try so hard not to let my “status” and all the missed opportunities I’ve encountered get the best of me. I try not to focus on the fact that my home, in retrospect, has refused me as its own. I look away from graduation night and all that I could have been and look at all the possibilities instead. All I wanted was to take all the knowledge I wish to learn in a good university, and bring it back home. Bring it back to a place I hold dear to me, back home to the island of Saipan. However, I can’t leave. Yet, I can’t partake in events such as general elections that may very well affect me. This is what it feels like to be a prisoner in your own home. This is what it feels like to be “stateless.”

Frances graduated valedictorian from the Mount Carmel School in 2000. She lives in San Antonio with her parents, Isabelita and Pablito Amog.

So much irony in this Passion

By **PAUL RICHARD**
Special to The Washington Post

If Protestant Americans, diverse as they are, can be said to share a symbol, it has to be the clean-cut cross of Jesus they so liberally display. Hallmark puts it on cards, churches set it atop spires, celebrities hang it in their bling-bling. It’s out there in our image-world, standing crisp and white. Like other symbols, it is a weapon, and it has a history.

There are mysteries in its meanings, but not in its look. Its look is obvious: The whiteness stands for purity; the brightness for the Light. And that exact rectilinearity, 90 degrees, right on, points toward God, because it’s perfect. This cross is not the crucifix of the Roman Catholic church. No Jesus hangs on it. He’s already resurrected. No nail holes, no adze-marks, no gall-and-vinegar stains soil this immaculate abstraction. It’s no more of flesh than a diagram in a book of geometry. It’s been cleansed. It’s been washed of blood.

What hasn’t been washed of blood, what bathes in it, is “The Passion of the Christ,” which may be the bloodiest movie ever. Blood gets so much screen time in Mel Gibson’s film—for its oozings and its spurtings and its smearing of the wall—that it becomes the picture’s star. “The Passion” is a torture flick, intentionally Baroque. Its look comes less from Scripture than it does from Counter-Reformation painting.

These two visions have competed through the centuries. The Protestant Reformation stripped the cross clean. Counter-Reformation art answered by pulling out all the visual stops to defend the Catholic Church while confounding the Protestants’ aesthetics. The paintings Gibson imitates shared a propagandistic purpose. They were weapons in the wars between Protestants and Catholics that swept through Northern Europe in the 16th and 17th centuries. And these weren’t merely culture wars. They were sword-and-cannon battles in which countless people died.

And yet American evangelicals and fundamentalists—the Reformation’s children—are flocking to see “The Passion of the Christ.” The Rev. Billy Graham has called Gibson’s film “a lifetime of sermons in one movie,” though the difference, a big one, is that sermons come in words while movies do their work through the viewer’s eye. Protestants around the country are buying blocks of tickets. Out in Santa Rosa, Calif., a pastor named Andy Vom Steeg has sent out 10,000 postcards asking people in the region to see the Gibson movie and discuss it at his church.

All of which seems a little curious, and not just art-historically. There’s been an aesthetic flip: Hard-core, clean-cross Protestants would once have been appalled, en masse, by the Counter-Reformation style and its message. Now many lap it up.

Gibson’s action may be set in 1st-century Jerusalem, but his style comes from 17th-century Rome.

Special-effect skies, gleams from brass and leather, swirling darks and lights, heart-rending emoting—Rome’s militantly Catholic painters, and their peers in Spain and Flanders, went straight for the gut, and did so through the viewer’s responding eye. Gibson does the same. His Mary and Magdalene, shown in tear-streaked close-ups gazing dolorously upward, look just like Guido Reni’s. And when Gibson calls his film “a moving Caravaggio” it is because its swirlings, its gritty realism, its dark palette, and its scenes side-lit by torches come straight from Caravaggio’s paintings. In the 1950s, Hollywood’s Jesuses sported spotless white cashmere robes and shampooed hair, but Caravaggio dressed his figures in rags of sober hue. So does Gibson. Gibson needs these references because his movie is so gory. There is only so much you can do to hurt human flesh, but when the film has done enough, it does a whole lot more. The artiness is there to soften our disgust. Over his movie’s bloodiness Gibson has poured the sort of golden glow that rises through the yellowed varnish of Old Master paintings. And beneath his gore he shows us the many ripe conventions of Counter-Reformation art.

Martin Luther’s Reformation was a theological rebellion. At its core was a refusal. No longer would the rebels accept the pope in Rome, or the hierarchy he led, or the Latin of the Mass and of the Vulgate Bible, which most of them could neither read nor understand. If they themselves could read the Bible (which Luther soon began to translate into German), they could find their way to God with the aid of faith alone. They didn’t need the pope, they didn’t need his saints, they didn’t need his priests, and—as some began insisting—they didn’t need his art.

The more the reformers valorized the Word, the more they turned away from images. The most extreme among them—the “image-breakers,” the iconclasts—saw it as their duty to smash the sensual power—the scary, popish power—they sensed in Catholic art.

For the Pilgrims of East Anglia, the Huguenots of France, and the Calvinists of the Netherlands, Counter-Reformation art smacked of popishness, idolatry, unrestrained excess. They knew what the Counter-Reformation was counter to—it was counter to them. Its art, they understood, was devised to dent their scruples and to undo their aesthetic. They did not take it lying down.

On Aug. 10, 1566, at Steenvoorde in Flanders, a Calvinist preacher named Sebastian Matte told his listeners to go and smash the art in Catholic churches. Ten days afterward, the cathedral at Antwerp was methodically trashed (though later, under Catholic rule, Rubens was commissioned to re-do its splendor).

Such spasms of enthusiastic image-breaking erupted in the British Isles for most of the next century. “Lord, what work was here!” lamented the Bishop of Norwich in 1647. “What clattering of glasses! What beating down of walls!”

Think of all art destroyed, the statues with their heads knocked off, the broken stained-glass windows. Think of all the churches, especially in the Netherlands, with their murals whitewashed out.

Hatred was involved, of course, in destructions such as these. Class issues, and politics, and imperial disputes were also much in play, but so, too, was a scruple as old as monotheism—a fear of basely materializing the ungraspable Divine.

Most of the Protestant image-breakers, busily whitewashing and smashing, were confident that they had Scripture on their side. In Exodus 20, after all, God is pretty specific: “Thou shall not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness of anything that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth.” And Jesus was cited, too: “Blessed are they,” he tells us in John 20:29, “that have not seen and yet have believed.”

If American Protestantism can be said to have a visual style, this preference for the cleansed, the stripped-down, the ascetic, must be one of its chief strands. That plainness is still seen in the clean, white clapboard churches scattered through New England, in the Quaker meeting houses of Pennsylvania, all the way to the Crystal Cathedral in Orange County, Calif. No Catholic paintings taint these sanctuaries. Billy Sunday’s revival tent wasn’t hung with gilded frames. The Little Brown Church in the Vale, famous through song, is a structure without paintings. In Protestant America they’ve been absent from the start.

And now along comes Gibson, returning to center stage the vivid Catholic imagery—sensual, argumentative, Marian and Latinate—of Counter-Reformation art.

He is, no doubt, sincere. But then the Aztec priests who ripped out human hearts were pretty sincere, too. So are the flagellants who still bloody themselves for God in so many Shiite and Spanish-speaking countries. The act of seeking the divine through blood and gruesome suffering didn’t start with Gibson. It must be immensely old.

Many contemporary Protestants will approve of Gibson’s movie, and I bet they won’t be thinking of 17th-century Italian art, or popish propaganda, Calvinist image-breaking, or anything like that. That reviled mainstream Hollywood is taking Scripture seriously will fill their hearts with hope. That Gibson is a Roman Catholic, and a pre-Vatican II traditionalist, will not be held against him. He’s a conservative and a star.

The author has written about art for The Post since 1967.

PETE A.*From Page 1*

Washington Rep. Pete A. Tenorio stressed this point to members of the U.S. House of Representatives' Resources Committee during last week's oversight hearing on the issue.

He argued that, with the islands' limited economic base, there is a need to look at other avenues for economic development. However, this effort is being stymied by current laws that need to be amended and, without a representative in Congress, the CNMI is effectively locked out from further expanding its economic base.

"Valuable resources in the waters surrounding the Northern Marianas remain untapped. Because of volcanic activity that spawned the Marianas archipelago, the seabed is believed to be rich in minerals. We must explore the advantage of our proximity to Asia and seek those U.S. industries that wish to expand their markets into the East and yet maintain offices and operate on U.S. soil," Tenorio explained.

Tenorio stressed that a CNMI non-voting delegate in the U.S. House of Representatives would play a major role in facilitating these goals and aspirations. At the same time, it would extend democratic representation to American citizens in the CNMI and affirm Congress' commitment to the democratic principles of the republic, he added.

"I believe the CNMI is just as deserving of representation in Congress as the other U.S. territories. By showcasing our significance in American history, I hope to demonstrate that this issue is about justice, equity, and fairness for the people of the CNMI to have status in Congress equal to that of other U.S. territories," stressed Tenorio.

The CNMI resident representative also noted that the strategic location of the CNMI continue to have vital significance to U.S. national defense and security. He added that by virtue of the Covenant, the U.S. secures a permanent and vital extension of its foreign affairs and defense needs in the Western Pacific and neighboring and strategic Asian countries.

"These are critical to the overall readiness of American forces that maintain stability and peace in the region. In addition, four ships, stocked with the equipment needed to support Marine assault forces landing in Pacific and Middle East hot spots, are pre-positioned in Northern Mariana waters," Tenorio explained.

Tenorio also pointed out that a Northern Marianas nonvoting delegate would effectively represent the needs and interests of the islands, relieving other members of this responsibility.

The resident representative reasoned that, although efforts on economy, health benefits and cultural and educational program are being extended to the Northern Marianas, a nonvoting delegate seat would more effectively promote the interests of the CNMI people.

Cohen backs NMI bid for delegate

By **LIBERTY DONES**
REPORTER

Deputy Assistant Secretary for the Interior David B. Cohen has called on the U.S. House of Representatives to grant the CNMI a non-voting delegate seat in Congress, citing that the Commonwealth is the only permanently populated community in the U.S. without representation.

"Every other U.S. territory and commonwealth has a delegate to the House of Representatives, as does the District of Columbia. Every U.S. citizen, living in any part of America, has a member of Congress that represents him or her, except for the U.S. citizens in the CNMI," said Cohen in his oral testimony before the U.S. House Committee on Resources during the oversight hearing on the issue on Feb. 25.

Cohen noted that key issues such as health, welfare, economic development, security and other matters affecting the CNMI are decided in Congress.

Further, he cited that, in 1986, the U.S. Commission on Federal Laws had recommended that the CNMI have a non-voting delegate to the House of Representatives.

Cohen also took note of "important contributions that the CNMI has made and continues to make to pro-

tect the freedom and security of all Americans."

"Let's consider the stories of two Americans: Army Capt. James Pangelinan and Army specialist Monique Sablan," he told the committee.

These two, together with other soldiers from the CNMI, have put their lives on the line so that people of Iraq and Afghanistan can achieve the dream of a democracy, he said.

Pangelinan, who graduated from West Point, is now serving with the 25th Infantry Division in Iraq, patrolling through the treacherous Sunni Triangle, while Sablan, who is with the 101st Army Airborne Division, was badly injured on the leg when her convoy was bombed in Iraq. She remains in a hospital.

"Mr. Chairman, these brave young men and women from Saipan, Tinian, and Rota have the same dream for themselves as they do for the peoples of Iraq and Afghanistan. They dream of being represented in the national legislature of their country, the country whose uniform they proudly wear, the country that they proudly defend. They dream that they will one day have the representation that has been afforded to every state, territory and commonwealth in the American family," he said.

In his testimony, Cohen also not-

ed "a great deal of progress" in the CNMI garment industry, a hotly debated issue in the mid-90s.

He said that one factor in the improved conditions was the creation of the Office of the Ombudsman to protect the rights and welfare of foreign workers in the CNMI.

He noted that the first Ombudsman, Pam Brown, is now the CNMI Attorney General—"perhaps the most telling sign that things have changed in the CNMI."

Earlier, local government leaders expressed confidence that the CNMI's quest for the representation in Congress would be granted based on the overwhelming support it received from both local and federal officials.

Senate President Joaquin G. Adriano said the CNMI's nonvoting delegate legislation, which was earlier junked, will be reintroduced in the U.S. Congress.

Adriano, who also testified in the oversight hearing, said he is expecting favorable action by the committee.

He said that his testimony and those of Gov. Juan N. Babauta and Washington Rep. Pete A. Tenorio's sent a clear and convincing message to panel members.

Committee chairman Rep. Richard Pombo had led a team visit to Saipan in early January.

INTER-ISLAND*From Page 1*

While throwing his support behind the bill, Hofschneider noted that the House Natural Resources Committee should have taken into consideration that public lands on Saipan are diminishing due to more developments and land exchanges occurring in the Third Senatorial District.

"There are more claimants on Saipan than on Rota and Tinian. For purposes of this land compensation, it's diminishing public land availability on... Saipan.

"What I am proposing on the floor is

to restrict these exchanges on Saipan; those exchanges into Rota and Tinian should not be restricted because they have sufficient public lands available, more so than the Third Senatorial District," said the minority congressman. His suggestion was defeated.

Hofschneider surmised that his proposal was not entertained due to the members' desire to move forward with the bill.

"Between satisfying land exchanges and using land as a compensation rather than monetary compensation, land availability on Saipan has diminished considerably. So why not offer the possibility of people who have land ex-

changes on Saipan look at exchanging into Tinian and Rota? The economic potentials are there for the individuals. But that's an offer that the members didn't take heed."

Besides HB 14-68, the House passed three other bills: HB 14-76 to amend PL 12-40 regarding Tinian and Rota CIPs, HB 14-51 on reappropriating \$400,000 for Precinct 4 road improvements, and HB 14-3 to complement enforcement of the Tobacco Master Settlement Model Escrow statute.

The bills were approved as endorsed by committee reports supporting its passage. The House also adopted two resolutions and two joint resolutions.

ton Rep. Pete A. Tenorio testified before the panel last week.

"[The speaker] wanted to make it [but] he was in the Philippines just before that and he was undergoing some medical evaluation and check up, which was a follow up to his trip to the Philippines right after the inauguration. He wrote a letter to chairman [Richard] Pombo apologizing for not being able to attend," said Reyes.

The PIO also commented that it seems like the oversight hearing will bring fruitful results, amid reports that the CNMI generated a strong showing of support from the Interior Department, the territory of Guam, as well as testimonies offered by the CNMI delegation.

CONSERVATIVE*From Page 1*

Cabrera said his group was disappointed with recent events that included the resignation of Pangelinan.

Pangelinan resigned effective Feb. 17 over his disagreement with the governor on the Kagman farm leases.

Pangelinan earlier received an order from Babauta instructing him to rescind farm termination notices and to stop further issuance of such orders to farm leaseholders "without fact-specific reasons."

Pangelinan, who maintained that concerned farmers had violated permit regulations, had replied, saying the governor's order was "unfair and one-sided."

He then told the governor that if the order is not rescinded by Feb. 13, "I have no alternative but to resign." The governor kept his order.

The affected farmers have since regained access to their farms shortly after Pangelinan's resignation.

The former secretary said the non-renewal of permits for the U.S. Department of Agriculture-designated farm plots in Kagman was due to violation of rules of two holders, size reduction of plots, and "right sizing" of lots by DLNR.

The affected farms belong to permit holders Juan S. Torres, Sam Rayburn, Frank Castro, and Oscar Camacho.

The former DLNR secretary said that Torres violated article 17 of his permit by abandoning his plot.

He accused Rayburn of "illegally tapping" into the irrigation system and for "stealing and turning off water to other farmers."

He said Castro's farm must be reduced to create two farm plots, while Camacho's plot would be divided into two for experimental and school farming.

Farm plots in Kagman are about eight acres each. There are about 40 farmers who hold permits to farm in

the USDA project site.

Cabrera, in his letter, said his group "supports the splitting of unreasonably large farm plots and the equitable distribution of public farm land."

He agreed with Pangelinan that Rayburn "blatantly violated [permit] terms."

"The Kagman farm plots are for all eligible Saipan farmers. The unfair distribution of plot sizes has prevented a long waiting list of hopeful agriculturists from accessing the best farm lands in the CNMI," he said.

He said that rescinding Pangelinan's eviction orders against the farmers "severely undermined" the authority of the Secretary's office and the ability of the Department of Agriculture to monitor and enforce Kagman permits, the benefits of the federal and local funds used towards the purpose, and the credibility of S&NI SWCD.

"The evicted farmers claimed we are all liars, and your actions defended their claims," he told the governor.

He said the DLNR had informed the concerned farmers about their status long before their non-renewals.

Meantime, Rayburn and Camacho said downsizing of farm plots no longer subscribe to the principle of "commercial farming."

Besides, they said that they have legitimate concerns that the DLNR failed to address in its apparent goal to terminate their leases.

The farmers also indicated that the USDA project is a long-term partnership, which guarantees farmers up to 15 to 20 years of commercial farming in the area.

They said that it provided for "automatic" renewal of permits "unless there is an overwhelming reason not to renew."

They said that they have complied with the terms of their farm permits. Further, they said that since the project involves the federal government, the DLNR secretary could not unilaterally reduce sizes or redistribute farm plots.

Saipan Tribune

Make it your *DAILY* habit.

Tax seminar attracts 80-plus participants

By **MARK RABAGO**
REPORTER

Over 80 accountants attended the tax seminar organized by the Marianas Institute of Filipino CPAs and Accountants held last Sunday morning at the CNMI Multi-Purpose Center in Susupe. Resource speakers Jennie Chiu and Edgar T. Aguilar also treated attendees to a thorough and smart presentation of the seminar’s topic, the 2003 Individual and Corporate tax returns preparation and tax updates.

Chiu and Aguilar are the senior manager and manager of Tax Services at Deloitte Touch & Tohmatsu, respectively.

Mificpa president Annabelle Ramos presented a plaque of recognition to both Chiu and Aguilar, thanking them for serving as the seminar’s resource persons.

“Not only did the seminar draw the most number of participants in the many years we’ve been doing this, everyone I talked to also left the Multi-Purpose Center with a

Repeki graduates from Army combat training

The U.S. Army’s Delta Company 2nd Battallion 54th ITB out of Fort Benning, Georgia recently held its Basic Combat Training graduation ceremonies, with Private First Class Joaquin Q. Repeki among the several hundred who graduated that day.

The ceremony, held Feb. 6, 2004, completed long weeks of extensive military, academic, and physical training to become a soldier in the U.S. Army.

Repeki is the son of Mr. and Mrs. Joaquin Repeki Sr. of Tanapag, Saipan.

There to witness the graduation ceremony were members of the CNMI community also stationed in Fort Benning, Georgia. They included Bernice A. Aquino, Dora Aquino, PFC Jocelyn Campbell, PFC Lorenzo DL. Guererro, and PFC John P. Abraham. Walter Villagomez, who represented Washington Rep. Pete A. Tenorio, was also present.

While in high school, Repeki said it has always been part of his goal to pursue a career in the military.

“As a member of the Junior Reserve Officers Training Corps at Marianas High School, I developed a strong interest and got a first-hand look at military training, honor, and discipline” said Repeki. “The JROTC training I received helped set my career goals, achieve a higher rank, and helped me meet the Army’s expectations.”

Tenorio lauded Repeki, saying, “His commitment to be a part of the U.S. Armed Forces is a source of price to all of our people in the CNMI. I congratulate him for his sacrifice in the protection of our freedom and democracy, and in keeping our nation secure,” said Tenorio.

Repeki is awaiting deployment for South Korea, where he would get further advanced training in the Bradley 11-M Tanks.

more thorough knowledge of the topic,” said Ramos.

Mificpa public information officer Marlon Estigoy said that Chiu and Aguilar talked about everything and anything that an accountant must know in preparing tax preparations.

“They dealt with almost everything under the sun as far as

the topic was concerned. Everyone appreciated their effort in imparting their knowledge and the very effective way they delivered it,” he said.

Even former Mificpa president and current board member Leriza Debrum was quite pleased with the outcome of the seminar and also praised Chiu and Aguilar for

their expert presentation.

“The materials presented were what we really needed. Attendees were also encouraged to ask questions and all were answered with explanations, examples and given other options when available,” she said. “They were very knowledgeable on the subject matter and we’re all impressed

and thankful to have had both of them. Personally, I did not think tax seminars can be that interesting but they made it into one.”

Debrum joined Ramos in presenting the plaques of recognition to Chiu and Aguilar.

Among the subjects the speakers covered were Form 1040CM or Territorial Individual Tax Re-

turn, Form 1120CM or Corporate Income Tax Return, Permanent and Temporary Differences in Net Income per Book and Taxable Income, and 2003 Tax Update and Changes Applicable for the CNMI.

Mificpa founder Ignacio Banadera served as the seminar’s emcee, which began at 9am and finished at 12pm.

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WIA takes center stage in SCC meeting

The Saipan Chamber of Commerce will be holding its March general membership meeting at Aqua Resort's Raraina Restaurant today.

Registration will begin at 11:30am and the meeting will come to order at 12 noon. The meeting should last until 1:30pm and all members and guests are encouraged to attend this event. The fee to attend is only \$12 per person to cover the cost of the meal.

Today's guest speakers are Jesse Stein from the Workforce Investment Agency, Chuck Sayon of the American Memorial Park, and Pete Callaghan of the Veterans of Foreign War.

Stein will be discussing about the Workforce Investment Agency's capabilities in training and education through federal funding assistance programs. Stein will also explain how WIA aims to find out about the employment needs of the chamber members through understanding the difficulties of local workforce employment in hopes of bridging the gap in this issue.

Sayon will be giving an update on the 60th commemoration of the battle of Saipan to the business community while

Callaghan will be discussing the upcoming activities of the Veteran's of Foreign War, which is around the same time of the 60th commemoration activities.

During the meeting, D & W and the Workforce Investment Agency will be introduced before the general membership since they are the newest members of the chamber.

One of the benefits to being a member of the chamber is the reduced care premiums provided by HMO member PacifiCare Asia Pacific. The SCC said that enrollment for this program is in March so interested members are encouraged to join the chamber to avail of this benefit.

The chamber would also be holding its annual tax workshop tomorrow, March 4, at the Azucena II center of Dai-Ichi Hotel Saipan Beach. The half-day workshop is open to the public and the fees are \$20 for chamber members and \$30 for non-members.

To find out more about the chamber's activities, to find out how you can become a member of the chamber, or if you require special accommodations to attend the meeting, call 233-7150.

SIS welcomes new headmaster

Saipan International School has appointed Dr. Dale Jenkins as its new headmaster. Jenkins officially began his duties last Monday.

Jenkins is originally from California where he received his Bachelor of Arts degree from Whittier College. He served in the U.S. Peace Corps as a teacher in Palau, then went on to further his education and earned two master's degrees in Reading and Educational Administration and Supervision from the University of Guam. Jenkins' doctorate degree is in Education Policy Development and Management from the University of Oregon.

Jenkins has numerous years of teaching experience in California, Palau and Guam. In 1985, he was selected as a finalist in the NASA Teacher in Space Program. He founded

the Independent Interscholastic Athletics Association of Guam and served for three years as vice president/treasurer. Additionally, Jenkins has extensive experience in international education, having worked with the International Baccalaureate Organization and the Advanced Placement Program to develop internationally recognized rigorous academic programs for high school students.

For the past 16 years, Jenkins had served as head of the Upper School at St. John's School in Guam. During that period, he was the chief administrator for grade 7 and older, and responsible for development of the high school program for grades 10 through 12.

Saipan International School is a non-profit organization, and is the only private school in the CNMI not affiliated with any

organized religious group.

In the early 1990's, a group of parents wanting good education for their children combined efforts to form a new school. They wanted to create an environment that fostered academic, emotional and social growth in each child. On September 18, 1994, this dream became a reality. The school began with 45 students, preschool through sixth grade.

Enrollment increased the following year and the original building in San Jose would not accommodate the number of children enrolled for the 1995-96 school year. It was at this point that Victoria Akiyama Vaughan, a volunteer at the school, saw the need for a new school building. Vaughan identified a parcel of her property in As Lito as the new location of Saipan International School. Vaughan wanted

to give something back to the community, so she financed the construction of the new Saipan International School campus. In August 1995, classes began at the new campus with 114 students, preschool through seventh grade.

Over the following years, SIS increased in size. Presently, enrollment is at 213 students, preschool through 10th grade.

SIS is a continually striving to improve on the solid base it has established over the past 14 years. The school is still growing and plans to add 11th and 12th grades for the next school year. Under the leadership of Jenkins and the support of Vaughan, parents, students, teachers, and the community, SIS has a positive future and will continue to provide high quality educational opportunities for its students.

Little Ms. CNMI sets fundraising luncheon

The 2004 Little Miss CNMI contestants will be having a luncheon on March 20, 2004 at the 13 Fishermen Pavilion.

The menu will be red rice, coco salad, chicken, spare ribs, and a soda. All proceeds will be used for the pageant night, which will be held on April 10, 2004 at the fiesta hall of Hafa Adai Beach Hotel.



EDITH G. ALEJANDRO

Candidates in the 2004 Little Miss CNMI (left to right) Sara Kim, Hope Gomez, Joni Castro, Melody Johnson, and Kaynita Atalig, are presented to media. The project is spearheaded by the Junior Class of the Saipan Southern High School.

"Your help will truly make the pageant an event these girls will never forget!" according to the junior class of Saipan Southern High School, the pageant's organizer.

If there are any more interested contestants out there, the SSHS junior class is urging them to sign up as soon as possible and call SSHS at (670) 664-4000.

"It is vital that interested contestants sign up as soon as possible because rehearsals have already started last Monday March 01," the group said.

Mafnas eyes suit for Kobler sewer overflow

By **LIBERTY DONES**
REPORTER

Former Customs director Jose Mafnas is poised to file a lawsuit against the Commonwealth Utilities Corp. for its alleged failure to adequately address recurring sewer overflow incidents affecting his residence in Koblerville.

Mafnas told CUC executive director Lorraine A. Babauta in a Feb. 4, 2004 letter that almost every year, his family suffers from sewage overflow, including the latest incident that took place on Jan. 31, 2004.

Mafnas said the latest incident, which happened on Jan. 31, the backflow swamped his bedroom. Previous back-

flows had affected other areas in the house.

In the letter, Mafnas said he is already talking to a lawyer on the issue, "but I told him [lawyer] to stand-by pending a resolution between CUC and myself."

Babauta, in a Feb. 27 letter to Mafnas said the backflow "was not caused by CUC or any failure on CUC's part."

To date, she said, the CUC has expended some \$6,000 "in providing assistance to your family."

She said it included nearly \$4,000 for the alternative hotel accommodation, some \$900 to replace closets, \$364 to replace carpets and rugs, and at least \$800 to sanitize the house.

"This does not include the staff time devoted to dealing with this situation," she said, adding that CUC would also replace the laptop bag.

"The CUC is interested in resolving the situation between you and CUC regarding the back flow at your house. As you are aware, the backflow was not caused by CUC or any failure on CUC's part. However, because CUC recognized that the obstruction in the sewer line was nothing that you could have prevented either, CUC has been willing to assist you," she said.

Mafnas said that regardless of CUC's cited expenses for his three-week relocation to a hotel, it remains CUC's responsibility to fix the sewer problem.

pss





World

Rebel says he doesn't want to lead Haiti

By PAISLEY DODDS and IAN JAMES
AP WRITERS

PORT-AU-PRINCE, Haiti (AP)—Rebels occupied the national police headquarters but kept away from the U.S.-guarded presidential palace after their convoy entered the capital Monday to the cheers of thousands celebrating the ouster of President Jean-Bertrand Aristide.

Dozens of insurgents packing an eclectic array of weapons dating to World War II swaggered around a posh hotel where rebel leader Guy Philippe met with members of the political coalition that opposed Aristide. He was joined by rebel commander Louis-Jodel Chamblain, who is a former army death squad leader and a convicted assassin.

With U.S. military forces on the ground and more on the way, Aristide claimed they forced him to leave Haiti and told him they would “start shooting and killing” if he refused, according to a telephone interview with the exiled president after he was flown aboard a contracted U.S.-government plane to the impoverished Central African Republic.

Aristide was put in contact with The Associated Press by the Rev. Jesse Jackson on Monday following a news conference in Atlanta, where the civil rights leader called on Congress to investigate Aristide’s ouster.

U.S. officials called the allegation—repeated earlier by other U.S. critics who said they were called by Aristide—“nonsense” and “absurd.”

Philippe said he planned to make preparations for the new president, former Supreme Court Chief Justice Boniface Alexandre, to assume office, as called for in the constitution.

Asked whether he would like to be Haiti’s next leader,

Philippe said: “No, thank you.” “We are waiting for the order from the president to know what we’re going to do,” he said. “The country has a good start... People can be secure. They’re not alone.”

His convoy of some 70 rebels was greeted by thousands of Haitians, many shouting “Liberty!” and “Aristide is gone!” as the militants entered the city, then rolled into the plaza near the National Palace.

But a half dozen U.S. Marines guarded the palace and the rebels did not approach. Philippe has said that he has no political



Philippe

aspirations but wants reinstituted the Haitian army that ousted Aristide in 1991 and that Aristide disbanded in 1995.

In the capital, there were reports of reprisal killings of militant

Aristide supporters accused of terrorizing people. An AP reporter saw four bodies at Carrefour, on the outskirts of the capital, three of them with hands tied behind their backs and shot in the head execution-style.

The fourth body was that of a man allegedly shot by police, said witness Charlie LaPlanche. “He ran out of the (police) pickup truck and then it became a manhunt. He went into a house. They found him. And then they took him out and executed him,” he said.

Secretary of State Colin Powell said U.S. forces “will have a lead role” initially in restoring order to Haiti following the three-week rebellion that swept Aristide from power. The U.N. Security Council late Sunday approved the deployment of a multinational force to Haiti.

Defense Secretary Donald H. Rumsfeld estimated that between 1,500 and 2,000 U.S. troops would go to Haiti for a “relatively short period.” They would participate in an interim force, which

could include as many as 5,000 troops from several countries, that would stay until replaced by a U.N. peacekeeping force.

There were no clashes between the rebel force and the U.S. and French troops, who were establishing security at diplomatic missions and other sites. Philippe earlier said he welcomed the peacekeepers.

Powell said he did not want certain rebel leaders to take any role in a new government. Philippe was an officer in the army when it repressed dissident politicians.



AP

Opponents of former President Jean-Bertrand Aristide celebrate in front of the presidential palace in Port-au-Prince, haiti, Monday.

njhs

American commander: Saddam in good health

BAGHDAD, Iraq (AP)—An imprisoned Saddam Hussein is in good health, the commander of U.S. forces said Thursday without offering further details on the former Iraqi leader’s confinement.

“Health is good, no issues,” Lt. Gen. Ricardo Sanchez said. “He’s in good health.”

The International Committee of the Red Cross visited Saddam in jail for the first time Saturday. The visit was arranged after Saddam was declared a prisoner of war, entitling him to certain rights under the Geneva Conventions, including visits by

the international Red Cross and freedom from coercion of any kind during interrogations.

The ICRC ordinarily does not release details of such visits or the prisoner’s confinement, limiting their comments to reports to the governments holding the prisoners.

But Saddam did write a letter to his family that was to be delivered once the United States confirmed it did not contain any hidden messages to his followers.

U.S. forces captured Saddam on Dec. 13 as he hid in an underground bunker near his hometown of Tikrit.

Arabs consider new Mideast peace accord

By SALAH NASRAWI
AP WRITER

CAIRO, Egypt (AP)—Arab countries are considering backing an unofficial Israeli-Palestinian peace accord reached last year in Geneva, according to a document obtained by The Associated Press on Monday.

When the Geneva accord was made public, Egypt and Jordan—the only two Arab countries at peace with Israel—welcomed it as an effort to revive stalled peace talks and end more than three years of bloodshed.

But many Arab nations sharply denounced it, including Syria which said it made too many concessions. Others criticized its position on refugees.

The four-page Arab League document does not spell out how to resolve the stickiest issues. But in essence, it backs the so-called “Geneva Accord” reached last year by unofficial Israeli and Palestinian negotiators meeting in Switzerland.

The document never mentions the “Geneva Accord” by name, referring instead to “unofficial initiatives.” But a senior Arab diplomat, speaking on condition of anonymity, confirmed this was a reference to the Geneva Accord—and the contents themselves leave little room for doubt.

Arab leaders are to take up the matter at a summit in Tunis March 29-30.

The Geneva accord outlines the borders between Israel and a future Palestinian state, deals with Israeli settlements in Palestinian areas, and turns Jerusalem into a shared capital for both states.

It offers compensation to Palestinian refugees, but allows Israel to decide how many return—a point the Arab nations opposed.

The Arab League document reaffirms Israel’s “legal, political and



Arafat adviser murdered in Gaza City

GAZA CITY, Gaza Strip (AP)—Gunmen shot and killed a well-known adviser to Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat in Gaza City early Tuesday, security officials said.

Khalid al-Zaben was the best-known Palestinian to be killed in what appears to be growing power struggles in Gaza City. There is concern that with the weakening of Arafat’s Palestinian Authority and a planned Israeli pullout from most of the Gaza Strip, a chaotic situation might result, with Islamic militant groups angling for power there.

Al-Zaben, 59, was hit by 12 bullets as he left his office in the Sabra neighborhood, hospital and security officials said.

In other recent internal strife, rival groups opened fire on each other after an armed man slapped the police

chief. A policeman was killed in the exchange that followed.

That conflict involved Arafat’s forces and men loyal to Gaza strongman Mohammed Dahlan, an Arafat rival. Later, Arafat and Dahlan met in an attempt to stop the violence.

Al-Zaben published a weekly magazine devoted to Palestinian affairs and human rights. He joined forces with Arafat in the 1960s and had one been his media adviser and personal secretary.

He returned to Gaza along with Arafat and other exiled Palestinian leaders in 1994, under terms of Israeli-Palestinian interim peace accords.

Two of his brothers are Palestinian ambassadors in South America, and his son works as an airline pilot there. He is also survived by his wife and three daughters.

moral responsibilities for the creation of the Palestinian refugee problem,” but it does not insist the refugees return to their homeland.

According to the United Nations, 750,000 Palestinians fled or were driven from their homes in 1948; today, they amount to about 5 million with their descendants.

Titled “The Palestinian and Arab-Israeli conflict,” the Arab League document also calls for integrating ideas from the Arab accord adopted in Beirut in 2002, the U.S.-backed “road map” and “President George Bush’s vision.” It did not elaborate.

The “road map,” which calls for an

independent Palestinian state by next year, has been stalled since June.

Former Palestinian Information Minister Yasser Abed Rabbo, who negotiated the Geneva Accord with former Israeli Justice Minister Yossi Beilin, has visited Arab countries including Egypt, Jordan and Saudi Arabia, trying to convince the governments to back the accord with an Arab summit resolution.

Arab League foreign ministers met Monday in Cairo to prepare for the summit, where leaders are also expected to seek ways to invigorate their 22-member organization and consider a unified effort to reform Arab society.

A Palestinian woman carrying a baby, walks through an earthen mound, closed off with piles of dirt and concrete by Israeli forces in Sept. 2002 on the road leading to the West Bank village of Sheik Saad, that sits on a hilltop on the border of Jerusalem, Monday March 1, 2004.

AP

Putin names technocrat prime minister

MOSCOW (AP)—President Vladimir Putin nominated a low-profile technocrat to the post of prime minister on Monday, signaling he wanted a politically unambitious head of government to push through sensitive economic reforms.

The choice of Mikhail Fradkov—who also could become a scapegoat if the reforms fail—was announced six days after Putin’s unexpected dismissal of Prime Minister Mikhail Kasyanov and his Cabinet in advance of this month’s presidential election.

“If Putin wanted to surprise people, he definitely succeeded,” said analyst Masha

Lipman of the Carnegie Endowment.

Lipman said the move likely reflected Putin’s desire to improve relations with Western Europe.

Others saw Fradkov, 53, as a man who would do Putin’s bidding, including a push for unpopular but badly needed reforms to reduce government subsidies in sectors such as housing, health care and education.

Under the Russian, the prime minister’s main focus is the economy.

“It appears that Fradkov has been singled out as a man who could be sacrificed after he implements unpopular policies,” said Yevgeny

Volk of the Heritage Foundation.

Putin nominated Fradkov during a meeting with leading lawmakers from the dominant pro-Kremlin party, United Russia.

“We faced a task that was not simple,” Putin said in televised comments from the meeting, edging intense speculation about his choice as he heads into the March 14 presidential vote.

Fradkov was a foreign trade official during the Soviet era and served as Russia’s trade minister twice in the 1990s. He was appointed to head the tax police in March 2001, but the agency was disbanded last year. He was named envoy to the EU last March.

Venezuela postpones recall decision

CARACAS, Venezuela (AP)—Troops and opposition supporters clashed in the Venezuelan capital Monday, as election authorities postponed a decision on whether to accept the 3.4 million signatures demanding a recall vote on President Hugo Chavez.

Jorge Rodriguez, one of the council’s five directors, said the council decided to postpone the decision for the second day in a row to continue analyzing the signatures and allow the country to “move away from violence.”

“The National Elections Council will announce the ... results tomorrow,” Rodriguez said.

“The postponement came as hundreds of government foes demanding the recall clashed with National Guard troops. One soldier was wounded by gunfire, authorities said.

At least one person has been killed and dozens hurt since the protests began Friday while Chavez was hosting a summit meeting of 18 other developing nations. Troops have inundated rock-throwing protesters with tear gas to stop what government officials call “terrorist” acts.

“Their only aim is taking power through violence,” declared Infor-

mation Minister Jesse Chacon.

Chacon ruled out martial law to crack down on the protests. He insisted the government would regain control of the streets “little by little.”

Opposition leaders called the protests to demand that election officials approve a presidential recall petition presented in December.

The elections council was expected to reject up to 400,000 signatures outright and force more than 700,000 citizens to confirm they signed, sources involved in the verification process said on condition of anonymity.

Trial opens in Belgian girls’ slayings

ARLON, Belgium (AP)—Belgium’s public enemy No. 1 and three co-defendants went on trial Monday on charges of kidnapping, abusing and killing young girls in a mid-1990s crime spree that shocked the country—as much for the inept police work as for the depravity of the acts.

Marc Dutroux, 47, his ex-wife and two other defendants sat silently during selection of a 12-member jury and 12 alternates.

At one point Dutroux seemed to nod off. “Your client is going to fall asleep,” Judge Stefane Goux told



Dutroux

Xavier Magnee, one of Dutroux’ three lawyers.

The case deepened on the eve of the trial, when Dutroux said in a letter to VTM television network that he was part of a criminal network with tentacles in Belgian law enforcement. He said co-defendant Michel Nihoul, a 62-year-old Brussels lawyer, played a key role in the wider organization.

Dutroux is charged with kidnapping six girls and killing four of them. The girls, two of them just 8 years old, were abused in the cellar of a house owned by Dutroux.

At the time the former electrician was

free on parole for abducting and raping young women, including one minor.

Dutroux is also charged with killing an accomplice, Bernard Weinstein, whose body was found in a yard next to one of Dutroux’s seven homes.

A parliamentary probe found that rival police units hindered the search for Dutroux, who was finally arrested Aug. 13, 1996.

Investigating magistrates have bickered over whether he was a loner or part of a pedophilia network. One magistrate was even removed for showing bias when he attended a benefit event for the victims’ families.

Criticism of law enforcement officials increased after Dutroux grabbed a police guard’s gun and escaped on April 23, 1998. He was arrested three hours later.

Security was clearly a concern Monday. Hundreds of police were on hand for the start of the trial in Arlon, a sleepy southern Belgian town with a new courthouse equipped with a bulletproof defendants’ box.

The trial will likely run through most of May. In all, some 500 witnesses will be heard. The case file stretches across 450,000 pages.

Life & Style

Literary treasures offered to library

By AUDREY WOODS
AP WRITER

A royalty check endorsed by Jane Austen. Letters from Charles Darwin about "The Origin of Species." Stacks of correspondence with Lord Byron.

That's just a hint of the literary treasure in the house at 50 Albemarle St. in London, where from 1812, successive generations of John Murrys ran one of the most distinguished imprints in English publishing history.

The seventh John Murray, who sold the business two years ago, has offered this astonishing archive to the nation for \$61 million.

The Scottish government was expected to announce Tuesday its support for the purchase of the John Murray Archive for The National Library of Scotland. The library has asked for \$41 million of national lottery money, and some of the financing would have to come from fund-raising.

Murray says none of the money will go to any family member. Rather, \$5.6 million would endow the archive immediately and the rest would go into a

charitable trust to expand and preserve the collection, maintain the London house and support other causes.

The collection of 150,000 letters and documents records the family's close relationship with its authors and the detail of print runs, costs and sales of their books—from Jane Austen's "Emma," and Byron's "Childe Harold" in the 19th century to Kenneth Clark's "Civilisation" in the 20th.

The firm was founded in 1768 in Fleet Street. From 1812 until it was taken over, the firm operated from the Albemarle Street house in London's Mayfair district. Its gracious book-lined rooms remain much as they were when Lord Byron and Sir Walter Scott met there, and when leading scientists and political figures gathered and exchanged ideas.

Over the decades, the company ledgers and boxes of correspondence piled up.

"When I came here it was all in linen cupboards under the eaves in the roof," said John Murray VII, smiling at the memory. Byron's letters and Darwin's were filed on shelves



John Murray VII and Virginia Murray in the London office of Murray's publishing house, London, Monday March 1, 2004.

marked "sheets" and "underpants."

Murray set about making the collection more secure.

"I put in a proper muniment room,

flood-proof and fireproof," he said, seated in a 19th-century room overlooking a 21st-century swarm of taxis and cars. Some papers are stored

securely elsewhere.

The collection has much to reveal about the book trade.

"Murray (II) used to give these wonderful dinners at the Albion Tavern and ply his booksellers with the best claret until they were tight and then he'd sell them masses of his books," his descendant told reporters Monday.

Because writers often became friends, many letters are candid, forthright and rich in detail and personality.

David Livingstone, the 19th-century explorer of Africa, illustrates some of his letters with sketches. In one, about the proofs of a manuscript, he complains strongly about the quality of a drawing of a lion.

Darwin tells John Murray III to print only 750 copies of "The Origin of Species by Means of Natural Selection" because of its limited interest. It became one of the most influential books of the 19th century.

One of the most important collections is of the manuscripts, letters and journals of Lord Byron, who scandalized society with his behavior and thrilled it with his poetry.

'Rings' reverses Oscar viewership dip

LOS ANGELES (AP)—"The Lord of the Rings: The Return of the King" helped reverse last year's sharp drop in Oscar viewership, but the staid ceremony couldn't match the buoyant "Titanic" ratings of 1998.

ABC's telecast Sunday drew 43.5 million viewers, up 32 percent over last year's war-depressed ratings and putting the show on par with 2002 (41.8 million) and 2001 (42.9 million).

But even the last installment of the enormously popular "Rings" fantasy epic, which won 11 Academy Awards to tie the record shared by "Titanic" and "Ben-Hur," couldn't pull ABC close to the high of 55.2

million viewers who tuned in when "Titanic" ruled.

Last year, when "Chicago" took best picture and the ceremony coincided with the start of the Iraq war, ratings dipped to a modern low of 33 million viewers.

ABC, which organized a massive promotional blitz to restore luster and ratings to this year's show, said it was satisfied with the results. Oscar plugs were inserted in ABC soap operas and other shows.

"Anytime you get a 32 percent gain versus a year ago, you have to be pleased," Larry Hyams, ABC research chief, said of the figures released Monday by

Nielsen Media Research.

Final ratings were to be released Tuesday with little if any variation expected.

First-time ceremony producer Joe Roth—a studio head whose company's credits include the mainstream "Anger Management" and "Daddy Day Care"—brought back popular host Billy Crystal and his clever pre-filmed openings.

Moving the ceremony up by a month and keeping it relatively tight (3 hours and 25 minutes, well shy of the 2002 record of 4 hours, 23 minutes) also helped, said academy President Frank Pierson.

Blake hires fourth attorney

LOS ANGELES (AP)—Robert Blake appeared in court Monday with a new lawyer—his fourth since he was charged with murdering his wife three years ago.

M. Gerald Schwartzbach, 59, has practiced criminal law for more than 35 years. In his best-known case, he won the acquittal of a lawyer accused of murder for his alleged part in a 1971 prison escape attempt by a Black Panther.

"I'm convinced of Robert Blake's innocence. I'm confident he's going to be acquitted at trial," Schwartzbach said outside court.

Blake's first two attorneys resigned after the actor pursued media interviews against their advice. His third attorney stepped down Feb. 5, on the eve

of what was supposed to be the start of Blake's trial, because of "irreconcilable differences" with his client.

The trial is now scheduled to begin Sept. 9.

Blake, the 70-year-old star of the 1970s TV series "Baretta," is accused of killing 44-year-old Bonny Lee Bakley in 2001. She was shot to death in their car outside a restaurant where they had dined.

Schwartzbach was asked whether he hesitated to take Blake's case after the actor's history of problems with other lawyers.

"This is a very interesting and challenging case and I think many experienced lawyers would look forward to being involved in it," he said.

mell
+red/blue

‘Passion’ poised to continue climbing

LOS ANGELES (AP)—After opening with an astonishing \$125.2 million over five days, Mel Gibson’s “The Passion of the Christ” is positioned to get even bigger as the Christian season of Lent leads up to Easter on April 11.

The box-office total announced Monday by distributor Newmarket Films pushed “The Passion” past “The Lord of the Rings: The Return of the King” (\$124.1 million) for biggest debut ever by a film opening on a Wednesday—Ash Wednesday, in this case.

The total was almost \$8 million more than Newmarket first estimated, because far more people turned out Sunday to see Gibson’s grisly crucifixion recreation than originally predicted.

“I think we’ll see strong bookings leading up to Easter, and I would anticipate Easter would be a huge weekend,” said Bruce Davey, Gibson’s partner at his film company, Icon Productions.

The movie, which stars Jim Caviezel as Christ, has deeply divided religious communities. Church groups have bought out entire theaters for screenings, while some Jewish and Christian leaders say “The Passion” could revive the notion that Jews were collectively responsible for Christ’s death.

The film played strongly among all age and ethnic groups and in every region of the country, especially in some Bible belt and heartland cities such as Dallas, Houston and Oklahoma City, said Rob Schwartz, head of distribution for Newmarket. Gibson hired the independent outfit to put “The Passion” in theaters after Hollywood studios shied away.

“The Passion” ultimately could take in between \$300 million and \$350 million in the United States and Canada alone, Schwartz said.

The movie also opened in Australia and New Zealand on Ash Wednesday and is gradually debuting worldwide. Through March and April, “The Passion” will open in such countries as Great Britain, Germany, Italy, Mexico and most of South America.

Stewart delivers news to younger viewers

By **DAVID BAUDER**
AP TELEVISION WRITER

NEW YORK (AP)—Tom Brokaw, Peter Jennings, Dan Rather...and Jon Stewart? Readers over 30 might scoff at Stewart’s inclusion—assuming they know who he is. For many under 30, the host of Comedy Central’s “The Daily Show” is, improbably, an important news source.

A poll released earlier this year by the Pew Research Center for the People and the Press found that 21 percent of people aged 18 to 29 cited “The Daily Show” and “Saturday Night Live” as a place where they regularly learned presidential campaign news.

By contrast, 23 percent of the young people mentioned ABC, CBS or NBC’s nightly news broadcasts as a source.

Even more startling is the change from just four years ago. When the same question was asked in 2000, Pew found only 9 percent of young people pointing to the comedy shows and 39 percent to the network news shows.

The people at “The Daily Show” ridicule the idea of people looking to their show as a primary news source.

“A lot of them are probably high,” Stewart cracked. “I’m not sure, coming off of robots fighting and into our show, what we’re dealing with out there.”

Think again, Jon.

Random conversations with nine people, aged 19 to 26, waiting to see a taping of “The Daily Show” last week revealed two who admitted they learned much about the news from the program.

None said they regularly watched the network evening news shows.

“I’m not really interested,” said Michelle Cohen, a 20-year-old New Yorker. “A lot of those

shows focus on topics that have absolutely nothing to do with me, like old people’s health care.”

As if to drive the Pew survey’s point home, “The Daily Show” reached a ratings milestone during the two weeks of the Iowa caucus, New Hampshire primary and State of the Union address. For the first time, Stewart’s show had more male viewers aged 18 to 34 than any of the network evening news shows.

One newspaper, Newsday, has Stewart listed atop a list of the 20 media players who will most influence the upcoming campaign. Tim Russert, Ted Koppel, Sean Hannity, among others, trailed.

Stewart’s success at skewering news people, and not just newsmakers, has particularly scored with his audience.

“They poke fun at how cheesy the regular news shows are, and somebody needs to do that,” said Joe Van Vleet, a 25-year-old Californian attending college in New York City. He mimicked a news anchor’s voice and marveled at how they all sound the same.

Nicole Vernon, a 24-year-old bartender from New York City, said she finds much of television news “silly.”

Stewart, she said, “keeps it very truthful and straightforward.”

Hold on there, said Ben Karlin, the show’s executive producer. A “Daily Show” viewer who doesn’t supplement it with real news isn’t very well-informed, he said. Pew confirmed that; its survey showed that people who regularly learned news from the comedy shows were less likely to know basic facts of the campaign.

Jim Murphy, “CBS Evening News” executive producer, read the Pew study closely. “I’ve passed being depressed about that,” he sighed.

Evening news producers have



Stewart

long recognized their audience is older; the common theory is that when people get jobs, mortgages and children, they’ll take a greater interest in their programs.

The worry is that with so many other sources of news available now, young people will become accustomed to

them and not make the evening news a priority.

Steve Capus, “NBC Nightly News” executive producer, said he had a sense that more young viewers were watching right after the 2001 terrorist attacks. Now, he’s not so sure.

The challenge is to get young

viewers more consistently, not simply when there are monumental stories, he said.

Murphy said he’s constantly trying to keep up with new technology and trends in how people get news. Ultimately, he said, you simply have to make the best newscast you can.

Still no answers in Spalding Gray case

NEW YORK (AP)—Nearly two months after actor-writer Spalding Gray walked out of his Manhattan apartment and disappeared, his wife holds out hope that he will return unharmed.

“Everyone that looks like him from behind, I go up and check to make sure it’s not him,” Kathleen Russo said in a recent phone interview with The Associated Press. “If someone calls and hangs up, I always do star-69. You’re always thinking, ‘maybe.’”

Police said they have received 36 tips since Gray’s disappearance Jan. 10, including several accounts from reliable witnesses who believe they saw Gray on the Staten Island ferry the night he vanished. Russo has said she

fears he may have tried to jump off the boat.

Gray tried suicide several times, including an attempt in late 2002 to jump off a bridge near his second home at the east end of Long Island. A passer-by talked him down.

Most of the tips, however, have led nowhere, officials said.

One came from a former police officer who thought he saw Gray in a diner in Newburgh, N.Y., about 60 miles north of New York City. But when police reviewed tape from the diner’s surveillance camera from that day, they saw no sign of the actor.

A woman in Beverly Hills, Calif., snapped a photograph of a man she thought was Gray and sent it to Russo. It wasn’t him.

aguilar

cpa



AP
California Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger, center, chats with host Jay Leno, right, and former California governor Gray Davis during "The Tonight Show" at the NBC studios, Monday, Mar. 1, 2004, in Burbank, Calif.

Arnold, Davis appear on Leno

LOS ANGELES (AP)—Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger, who launched his successful candidacy last summer on "The Tonight Show with Jay Leno," headed back to the late-night platform Monday with Gray Davis, the man he ousted in California's historic recall election.

The appearance by the Republican Schwarzenegger and Davis, a Democrat, was meant to promote Schwarzenegger's \$15 billion bond measure to reduce the state's debt.

The men hatched the idea of a joint appearance to promote the bond measure during a recent

dinner, aides said, but the decision to go on the show wasn't finalized until Monday morning.

Voters will consider the measure, known as Proposition 57, on Tuesday's primary ballot. If approved, it would pay down the state's debt and help close next year's projected budget shortfall. The measure is paired with Proposition 58, which would create a reserve fund and restrict future borrowing by legislators. Both measures need to pass for either to be enacted.

Schwarzenegger has campaigned aggressively for the measures, warning of "Arma-

geddon cuts" if they fail to pass. Davis, who was recalled largely because of his role in the state's fiscal crisis, has also spoken out publicly in favor of them.

"Gov. Davis and Gov. Schwarzenegger have enjoyed a cordial relationship and Gov. Davis has been a class act through this entire thing," said Schwarzenegger spokesman Rob Stutzman. "They'll have a little fun tonight on the show."

In the days since the recall, Schwarzenegger and Davis have socialized occasionally and spoken by telephone several times. But they have not ap-

peared in public together since Schwarzenegger's inauguration in November.

"Gov. Davis has wanted to show support for the bond issues in any way he could, and thought a casual format was the best way to do it," said Davis spokesman Jeff Kiernan.

Schwarzenegger chose an appearance on "The Tonight Show" last August to make his surprise announcement that he was running for governor. He returned to the program for a brief appearance two days after the election.

Carson Foundation donates to Iowa center

RED OAK, Iowa (AP)—Johnny Carson is lending a hand to a performing arts center in southwest Iowa. The Performing Arts and Education Association has received a donation from the John W. Carson Foundation for the proposed arts center in Red Oak, said Larry Brandstetter, the association's president.

"We celebrate this acknowledgment of our dream," Brandstetter said.

Carson, who retired from NBC's "Tonight Show" in 1992 after 29 years, was born in Corn- ing, also in southwest Iowa, and grew up in Norfolk, Neb.

"He understands how important the arts are to young people and how much this project will mean to the youth of the region," Sally Foss, the association's executive director, told The Daily Nonpareil.

Foss said Carson donated money, but the amount wasn't released. She said it would go toward classrooms and rehearsal space.

The center will provide entertainment and performance arts educational opportunities to the region, with emphasis on dance, theater arts and music.

Diana's friend says she was cheerful

NEW YORK (AP)—The go-between who helped record the interview tapes on which Princess Diana described her failed marriage says people would be surprised at what a cheerful lady she ultimately was.

Dr. James Colthurst, a longtime friend of Diana's, recorded interviews that became the basis for Andrew Morton's 1992 book, "Diana, Her True Story."

NBC is using these tapes—never before heard in the United States—as the basis for a two-part special. "Princess Diana: The Secret Tapes" will air this Thursday and March 11.

Cheerfulness is the last thing people might expect, considering Morton's book gave Diana's side of an unhappy marriage. Diana soon separated from Prince Charles and they divorced in 1996, a year before her death in

a Paris car crash.

"She was actually a lady who had a great deal to offer—a great spark and enthusiasm," Colthurst said in an interview with The Associated Press.

That doesn't come across in subsequent, downbeat portrayals of Diana, or even in the written transcripts of the tapes she made with him.

"It's very hard to transcribe a giggle or a laugh," he said.

Clapton puts 'Tears in Heaven' to rest

NEW YORK (AP)—Two of Eric Clapton's best-known songs are gone from his concert repertoire—perhaps for good.

The guitar legend found, during a series of concerts in Japan a few months ago, that he couldn't perform "Tears in Heaven" and "My Father's Eyes."



Clapton

The songs, both Grammy Award winners, deal with the loss of his 4-year-old son, Conor, who died when he fell from a New York apartment in 1991.

"I didn't feel the loss anymore, which is so much a part of performing those songs," he said in an interview with The Associated Press.

"I really have to connect with the feelings that were there when I wrote them," he said. "They're kind of gone and I really don't want them to come back, particularly. My life is a different life now."

He said he'd feel conflicted to sing the songs at a time when he's happy.

"They probably need a rest," he said, "and maybe I'll introduce them from a much more detached point of view."

Beyonce's 17-year-old sister weds

NEW YORK (AP)—Beyonce's little sister is now a married woman. Solange Knowles, 17, wed Daniel Smith in a ceremony in the Bahamas over the weekend, according to her record company, Columbia Records. Beyonce, her parents, Mathew and Tina Knowles, and

Destiny's Child member Kelly Rowland were in attendance.

"I am excited about this new phase in my life," Solange said Monday in a statement. "I am very happy and feel truly blessed to have the unconditional love and support of my parents and my entire family."

Solange released her debut CD, "Solo Star," last year. She'll make her feature film debut in "Johnson Family Vacation," due out later this year, her record label said.

Smith, a college football player, and Solange are natives of Houston.

Reaching out to shy teens brings moms, girls together

By Abigail Van Buren

DEAR ABBY: I have questions about "growing up." I am 15 and want to talk to my mom about it, but I'm embarrassed. We talk about some stuff, but most of the time I wait until I can't stand it anymore and finally talk to her.

Do you have any ideas about making it easier for me to open up to my mom? I want to just walk through the front door and say, "Hey, Mom, I've got a question"—but I can't. I'm too shy. Abby, please help!



Dear Abby

TOO SHY IN A SMALL TOWN

DEAR TOO SHY: I'm sad to say your question is very common. It is repeated in nearly every batch of mail I receive. Teenage girls want to talk to their mothers, but they are afraid to reach out.

What I recommend are scheduled mother-daughter dinners, one-on-one time where there are no distractions, and feelings can be discussed, questions answered and opinions and attitudes aired and explained. This quality time can be the basis of precious memories and the foundation for trust and closeness. If this seems far-fetched, consider how many thousands of young girls have such distant relationships with their mothers that the only person they feel they can confide in is an advice columnist. Mothers, please reach out to your daughters. You'll be glad you did.

DEAR ABBY: My children attend a local elementary school here in Dallas. They are in kindergarten and second grade.

Other parents have told me about a practice that occurs in third grade at our school. If a child's desk is not properly organized (to the teacher's specifications), the teacher does a "desk dump" in front of the class and orders the child to put the items back using the "proper organization."

I don't think public humiliation is an appropriate teaching technique. And I seriously doubt that the children learn anything more than fear of their teacher.

Fortunately, the school district does not allow corporal punishment; however, this kind of emotional abuse can be almost as destructive as physical abuse for children this young.

What do you think of this "teaching technique"?

WORRIED PARENT IN TEXAS

DEAR WORRIED: I think it is unacceptable, outmoded and should be scrapped. Instead of teaching children, it means them and causes resentment.

Since you feel strongly about it, visit the principal and confirm that the stories are true. If they are, ask that the teacher be instructed about what is appropriate and effective and what is not. If the teacher persists, you and other concerned parents should take this matter up with the school board.

DEAR ABBY: I am 7 years old. I live with my mother and father in a small apartment. I have two fish, two cats, a hamster and a mouse—but I would also like a dog. My mother says our apartment is too small. My dad says to ask you because I practice reading through your column. Plus, I told my dad that I would ask your advice. Thank you.

AMBER IN CHICAGO

DEAR AMBER: At the risk of getting myself in the doghouse, I vote with your mother. Two fish, two cats, a hamster and a mouse are already quite a sizable menagerie for a family of three living in a small apartment. Enough is enough.

I'm pleased that you read my column—it's never too early to start.

Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Write Dear Abby at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.

Abby shares more than 100 of her favorite recipes in two booklets: "Abby's Favorite Recipes" and "More Favorite Recipes by Dear Abby." Send a business-size, self-addressed envelope, plus check or money order for \$10 (U.S. funds) to: Dear Abby—Cookbooklet Set, P.O. Box 447, Mount Morris, IL 61054-0447. (Postage is included in price.)

Pastimes

CROSSWORD

By Eugene Sheffer

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By Bryan Basset

The Duplex

By Glenn McCoy

CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY

Justin Jeffre, Sean Astin, Lesley Boone, Sally Jessy Raphael

HAPPY BIRTHDAY: Having a crusader attitude will make all the difference in the world this year. Be a little stubborn if you think you are right. Be diverse in all that you do and you will meet the demands being put on you and accomplish your goals. Your numbers are 2, 13, 17, 29, 31, 40

EUGENIA LAST

THE LAST WORD IN ASTROLOGY

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ARIES (March 21-April 19)
Push to make others aware of what you are doing and how you believe it will help everyone on some level. If you can sell your ideas to others, you will put yourself in a favorable position. □□□

TAURUS (April 20-May 20)
This is a perfect day to make some much-needed adjustments. Opportunities will manifest themselves in the most unusual places, so don't hesitate to talk about your dreams. □□□

GEMINI (May 21-June 20)
Keeping a secret will be of utmost importance today. By disclosing what you are up to, you could blow a deal or your cover. Work by yourself; question your motives. □□□

CANCER (June 21-July 22)
Do something creative today that can be used to benefit others. The more you do to help make reforms, the better. □□□□

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22)
You will be misled if you are too gregarious. Tone down and observe what others are doing. Advancement may be at stake. □□

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22)
You can find an ideal romantic partner if you get out and do things that interest you. Get involved in talks that will stimulate your mind and broaden your perspective about projects you want to pursue. □□□□□

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22)
Prepare yourself well so that you can follow through with what's necessary as quickly as possible. Don't be lazy or waste time thinking about what you should be doing. □□□

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21)
Partnerships will be a little hard to handle if you don't take precautions and fully prepare. You can get on with your plans and get the praise you deserve. □□□

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21)
Your work ethics will pay off, so roll up your shirtsleeves and work alongside others for best results. Your team-player approach will put you in a leadership position. □□□

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19)
You should be developing your ideas today. If you find someone particularly inspiring, spend time discussing your plans together. Love and romance will be on your doorstep. □□□□□

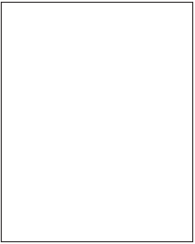
AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18)
Take the initiative to follow what you feel is the best path and refrain from being led astray. Prepare to take a pass on what others are asking of you. □□

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20)
Your involvement in good causes will be rewarded today. You will begin to see the results of a job well done. Someone unusual, but interesting, will want to get to know you better. □□□□

BIRTHDAY BABY: You are proactive and never take the conventional route. Your outgoing nature always leads to adventure and excitement. You will chase your dreams until you reach your destiny.

Check out Eugenia's Web sites at astroadvice.com and eugenialast.com.

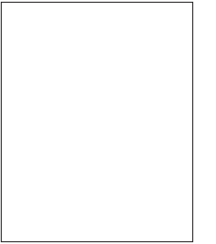




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SAIPAN TRIBUNE